

disclose this layer. However, Figs. 4 and 10 of Yasumoto merely disclose a gas diffusion electrode, which has a distinct catalyst layer, but no distinct electron collection layer.

Furthermore, claim 1 recites that "at least one of the...electron collection layer[s are] constructed in porous form by stacking conductive material." Also, claim 1 recites that at least one of the electron collection layers has a "plurality of rows...separated by gaps, [with] a conductive material particle in one row being in contact with conductive material particles in and adjacent row." Yasumoto does not disclose or suggest this feature.

The Office Action appears to assert that Yasumoto discloses that its gas diffusion electrodes possess all of the recited properties. The Office Action cites to col. 9, lines 1-10, which allegedly describe how the gas diffusion electrode has "cavities formed mainly between conductive particles." The Office Action also cites to col. 9, lines 35-65, and Figs. 9 and 11, which allegedly show how the gas diffusion electrode 24a, 54a is made up of three layers: a catalyst layer 53, a conductive polymer layer 52, and a porous material 51. The Office Action appears to be asserting that these layers correspond to the stacked layers of the electron collection layer.

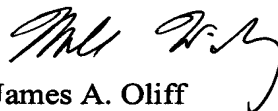
However, the gas diffusion electrode of Yasumoto is analogous to the recited reaction layer (and the gas diffusion layer discussed in the instant specification but not explicitly recited). As such, Yasumoto does not disclose or suggest an electron collection layer having a "plurality of rows...separated by gaps, [with] a conductive material particle in one row being in contact with conductive material particles in and adjacent row."

For at least the above reasons, Yasumoto does not disclose or suggest the features of claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1, and claims 2, 7 and 8 depending therefrom, is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 2, 7 and 8 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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